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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/587,920	03/05/2007	Eugen Leopold	1-17498	3642
1678	7590	05/22/2009	EXAMINER	
MARSHALL & MELHORN, LLC FOUR SEAGATE - EIGHTH FLOOR TOLEDO, OH 43604				LANGEL, WAYNE A
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
1793				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
05/22/2009		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/587,920	LEOPOLD, EUGEN
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Wayne Langel	1793

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 7-11 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 7-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 02 August 2006 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ . |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8-2-06</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ . |

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 7-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vanmarcke et al in view of Perry (Chemical Engineers' Handbook). Vanmarcke et al disclose a process for producing a urea fertilizer wherein the apparatus includes a synthesis unit, an evaporation unit and a granulation unit. (See col. 5, lines 1-17.) The difference between the process disclosed by Vanmarcke et al, and that recited in claims 7-11, is that Vanmarcke et al do not disclose that the product stream downstream of the evaporator unit and upstream of the granulation unit should be conveyed by means of a self-regulating centrifugal pump. in the direction of the granulation unit. Perry discloses on page 6-5 that the centrifugal pump is the type most widely used in the chemical industry for transferring liquids of all types, and teaches that the primary advantages of a centrifugal pump are simplicity, low first cost, uniform flow, small floor space, low maintenance expense, quiet operation, and adaptability to use with motor or turbine drive. It would be obvious from Perry to modify the process of Vanmarcke et al by employing a centrifugal pump to pump the product stream from the evaporation unit to the granulation unit. One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to do so, since one would want to realize the many aforementioned advantages associated with use of a centrifugal pump, versus other types of pumps. It would be further obvious to employ a self-regulating centrifugal pump, since one of ordinary skill in the art would be

Art Unit: 1793

motivated to simplify the process. There is no evidence on record of unexpected results which would emanate from the use of a self-regulating centrifugal pump, versus other types of pumps, in the process of Vanmarcke et al.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 7-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Terms such as "comprising essentially", "arranged essentially", "disposed essentially" and "ideally flanged" render the scope of the claims vague and indefinite. In claim 7, line 3, it is indefinite as to what "unit" is intended with respect to "said unit". Also in claim 7, it is indefinite as to whether a nitrogen fertilizer is required to be produced, since the preamble recites "a process for producing nitrogen fertilizer", but there are no positive process steps in the main body of the claim which would necessarily result in the production of a nitrogen fertilizer.

Clothier et al is made of record for disclosing a fluid supply regulating system.

The other references are made of record for disclosing various methods for preparing nitrogen-containing fertilizers.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Wayne Langel whose telephone number is 571-272-1353. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 8 am - 3:30 pm Eastern Time.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stanley Silverman can be reached on 571-272-1358. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Wayne Langel/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1793